

UC Riverside

UC Riverside Previously Published Works

Title

Experimental Acute Exposure to Thirdhand Smoke and Changes in the Human Nasal Epithelial Transcriptome: A Randomized Clinical Trial.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/89s4p32q>

Journal

JAMA network open, 2(6)

ISSN

2574-3805

Authors

Pozuelos, Giovanna L
Kagda, Meenakshi S
Schick, Suzaynn
et al.

Publication Date

2019-06-01

DOI

10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.6362

Peer reviewed

**Experimental Acute Exposure to Thirdhand Smoke and Changes in the
Human Nasal Epithelial Transcriptome in a Randomized Study**

**Giovanna L. Pozuelos¹ MS; Meenakshi S. Kagda¹ PhD; Suzaynn Schick² PhD;
Thomas Girke¹ PhD; David C. Volz¹ PhD; Prue Talbot¹ PhD**

¹University of California, Riverside, USA

²University of California, San Francisco, USA

Corresponding author:

Dr. Prue Talbot

Professor of Cell Biology

Director of the UCR Stem Cell Center and Core

Department of Molecular, Cell and Systems Biology

Spieth 2320

900 University Avenue

University of California

Riverside, CA 92521

USA

951-827-3768 (telephone)

talbot@ucr.edu (email)

Date of revision: 5-8-2019

Word Count: 3,264

51
52

53**Key Points**

54**Question:** Does acute inhalation of thirdhand smoke (THS) alter the transcriptome
55of human nasal epithelium?

56**Findings:** A 3 hour inhalation exposure of four healthy nonsmoking females to
57clean air altered the expression of only two genes. When the same four females
58were exposed to THS at least 21 days later, 389 genes associated with cell stress
59and survival pathways were differentially expressed, and many affected genes were
60associated with increased mitochondrial activity, oxidative stress, DNA repair, cell
61survival, and inhibition of cell death.

62**Meaning:** Acute exposure to THS stresses the human nasal epithelium, a finding
63that will be valuable to physicians treating exposed patients.

64

65

66

67

68

69

70

71

72

73

74

75

76

77

78

79**Abstract**

80**Importance:** This is the first study to show that acute inhalation of thirdhand
81smoke (THS) activates stress and survival pathways in human nasal epithelium.

82**Objective:** To evaluate gene expression in the nasal epithelium of nonsmoking
83human females following acute inhalation of clean air and THS.

84**Design:** Nasal epithelium was obtained from participants in a clinical trial (2011-
852015) on the health effects of inhaled THS. In our crossover design, participants
86were exposed, head-only, to THS and to conditioned, filtered air. The order of
87exposures was randomized and exposures were separated by at least 21 days.

88**Setting:** Experiments were performed in a controlled laboratory setting.

89**Participants:** RNA in quantities sufficient for analysis was obtained from a subset of
90four healthy, nonsmoking women.

91**Exposures:** By chance, the females in our subset had all been randomized to receive
92clean air exposure first and THS exposure second. Exposures lasted 3 hours.

93**Main Outcomes and Measures:** Differentially expressed genes (DEGs) were
94identified using RNA sequencing with a false discovery rate < 0.1 .

95**Results:** Participants were four healthy nonsmoking human females 27-49 years old
96(mean = 42) with no chronic diseases. 389 DEGs were identified in THS exposed nasal
97epithelium, while only two genes, which were not studied further, were affected by
98clean air. Cluster-Profiler identified enriched Gene Ontology terms associated with
99stress-induced mitochondrial hyperfusion, such as respiratory electron transport chain
100($q\text{-value} = 2.84\text{E}^{-03}$) and mitochondrial inner membrane ($q\text{-value} = 7.21\text{E}^{-06}$). Reactome
101Pathway Analysis identified terms associated with up-regulation of DNA repair

102 mechanisms, such as nucleotide excision repair ($q\text{-value} = 1.05\text{E}^{-02}$). Enrichment
103 analyses using Ingenuity Pathway Analysis identified canonical pathways related to
104 stress-induced mitochondrial hyperfusion (e.g., increased oxidative phosphorylation)
105 ($p\text{-value} = 5.13\text{E}^{-04}$), oxidative stress (e.g., glutathione depletion phase II reactions) ($p\text{-}$
106 $\text{value} = 4.36\text{E}^{-02}$), and cell survival ($z\text{-score} = 5.026$) .

107 **Conclusions and Relevance:** Acute inhalation of THS caused cell stress leading to
108 the activation of survival pathways. Some responses were consistent with stress-
109 induced mitochondrial hyperfusion and similar to those demonstrated previously *in*
110 *vitro*. These data will be valuable to physicians treating THS-exposed patients and will
111 aid in formulating regulations for the remediation of THS contaminated environments.

112

113Introduction

114 Thirdhand smoke (THS) is a subset of chemicals in secondhand cigarette
115smoke (sidestream smoke emitted by a burning cigarette and exhaled mainstream
116smoke) that sticks to indoor surfaces and persists after active smoking has
117occurred^{1,2}. THS chemicals accumulate and can react with other compounds or can
118be re-emitted into the environment^{1,2,3}. Nonsmokers can be exposed to chemicals in
119THS months or even years after smoking has stopped³. Many THS chemicals are
120toxic volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds^{2,3,4}. Nicotine, a major chemical in
121THS, has a high affinity for surfaces³ and can react with ambient nitrous acid to form
122tobacco-specific nitrosamines (TSNAs), some of which are carcinogens^{5,6}. Nicotine-
123derived nitrosamines in THS include 4-(methylnitrosamino)-1-(3-pyridinyl)-1-
124butanone (NNK), and N-nitrosonornicotine (NNN)^{5,6}, which are also found in
125secondhand smoke and have been associated with the development of lung
126cancer⁷. Ozone can also react with nicotine to form formaldehyde, a known human
127carcinogen⁸.

128 Due to the presence of these and other hazardous chemicals, such as acrolein,
129in THS, it is important to understand if there is a correlation between exposure to
130THS and human health, especially in nonsmokers. Previous studies have
131demonstrated that exposure of human cell lines to THS extracts for 24 hours
132increased DNA strand breaks and oxidative DNA damage^{9,10}. Mouse neural stem
133cells undergo blebbing, fragmentation, cytoskeletal disruption, and vacuolization
134when treated with extracts of THS¹¹. THS also causes stress-induced mitochondrial-
135hyperfusion (SIMH), which is accompanied by increased mitochondrial membrane
136potential, ATP production, and reactive oxygen species (ROS)¹². During SIMH,
137punctate mitochondria fuse and form tubular networks, which allow exchange of

138 molecules including mitochondrial DNA as a survival mechanism¹³. Acrolein has
139 been identified as a THS chemical that inhibits cell proliferation¹¹. In a metabolomics
140 study using male germ cells, THS exposure is correlated with down-regulation of
141 several molecular pathways, including nucleic acid metabolism, ammonia
142 metabolism and up-regulation of glutathione metabolism¹⁴.

143 THS also causes adverse health effects in mice. Three-week old mice that were
144 housed for 6 months in cages containing a THS-impregnated fabric and bedding
145 showed an increase in inflammatory cytokines in lung tissue, impaired wound
146 healing, and were hyperactive compared to controls¹⁵. Adult mice developed insulin
147 resistance as a consequence of oxidative stress caused by THS and showed
148 increased blood glucose, increased serum insulin, and accumulation of fat in
149 viscera¹⁶. Oxidative stress in skeletal muscle and accumulation of H₂O₂
150 accompanied by low catalase activity was observed in chronically exposed mice¹⁷.
151 After THS exposure, neonatal mice had significantly more eosinophils, increased
152 platelet volume, lower hematocrit, and decreased mean cell volume than controls,
153 while adult exposed mice had a significant increase in the percentage of B-cells and
154 a decrease in myeloid cells¹⁸.

155 Elimination of THS can be challenging, as it persists in houses previously
156 owned by smokers even after 2 months of vacancy¹⁹. Cars previously owned by
157 smokers also retain THS, and new owners may be at risk of exposure²⁰. Common
158 household fabrics retained THS chemicals 19 months after smoking had occurred⁴.
159 Individuals absorb nicotine through their skin while wearing THS exposed clothes²¹.
160 Moreover, infants whose mothers smoked outdoors had much higher levels of urine
161 cotinine, a nicotine metabolite, than infants of nonsmoking parents²². Other
162 examples of the persistence of THS have been reviewed recently².

163 Although these prior studies demonstrate humans are at risk of exposure to
164THS, the molecular effects of such exposure on humans have not been investigated.
165The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of inhalation of THS chemicals
166on gene expression in humans. Nasal epithelial cells were collected from
167nonsmokers before and after 3 hours of exposure to either clean air or to THS,
168subjected to mRNA sequencing (mRNA-seq), and analyzed for differential
169expression of genes (DEG). Significant changes in gene expression were found
170following THS exposure, but not exposure to clean air.

171

172

173**Materials and Methods**

174*Ethics:* The study was approved by University of California at San Francisco IRB
175Protocol number 12-09512. Details of participant recruitment, written informed
176consent screening, selection, compensation and involvement in the study appear in
177eMethods of the Supplement. The RNA-seq analysis was approved under IRB
178protocol HS-12-023 from UCR.

179

180*Study Population, Generation of THS, and THS exposure:* The protocol for the primary
181study during which the nasal epithelial cell samples were collected appears in the
182CONSORT Flow Diagram (Figure 1) and eMethods in the Supplement. It was conducted
183at the University of California, San Francisco between 2011 and 2015. Briefly, 26
184healthy nonsmokers who were not exposed to secondhand cigarette smoke (SHS) in
185daily life, were exposed, head-only to THS aerosol and to conditioned, filtered air for 3
186hours, using an exposure chamber described previously²³. Of these 26 individuals, 13
187(8 women, 5 men) had nasal epithelial cell samples collected before and after each

188exposure. Nasal epithelial samples were collected from the anterior, inferior turbinate
189using small, sterile plastic curettes (RhinoPro, Arlington Scientific, Inc. Springville, UT,
190USA). These samples were immediately placed in RNAlater and shipped frozen to the
191University of California, Riverside, where RNA extraction and subsequent analyses were
192performed.

193

194*RNA Isolation:* RNA was isolated from human nasal samples using RNeasy micro kits
195(Qiagen, Germantown, MD, USA) and stored at -80°C. RNA was quantified using a
196NanoDrop ND-1000 spectrophotometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA,
197USA). Samples from four participants had RNA concentrations > 3 ng/μL, and these
198were used for subsequent analysis. Frozen RNA samples were shipped to Cofactor
199Genomics (St. Louis, MO, USA) for library preparation and sequencing.

200

201*RNA Sequencing:* Cofactor Genomics performed quality control on RNA samples,
202and RNA integrity was determined using a Bioanalyzer (Agilent 2100). Samples with
203RIN numbers between 8 -10 were used for library construction. Total RNA was
204reverse-transcribed using an Oligo(dT) primer, and limited cDNA amplification was
205performed using the SMARTer® Ultra® Low Input RNA Kit for Sequencing-v4
206(Takara Bio USA, Inc., Mountain View, CA, USA). Full-length cDNA was fragmented
207and tagged, followed by limited PCR enrichment to generate the final cDNA
208sequencing library (Nextera® XT DNA Library Prep, Illumina, San Diego, CA, USA).
209Libraries were sequenced as single-end 75 base pair reads using an Illumina
210NextSeq500 following the manufacturer's instructions. Because the amount of nasal
211epithelium in each sample was very limited, we were not able to perform
212confirmatory qPCR.

213

214*Bioinformatics Analysis:* Fastq files obtained from Cofactor were processed on a
215High Performance Computing Cluster (HPCC) at the University of California,
216Riverside. The RNA-Seq analysis workflow implemented by systemPipeR²⁴ was used
217to perform all the downstream data processing. Briefly, adapter sequences and low
218quality tails were removed from the raw reads using the Trimmomatic package²⁵.
219The preprocessed reads were then aligned against the UCSC hg19 human reference
220genome with Tophat2 (Version 2.0.14)^{26,27}. Read counting was performed with the
221*summarizeOverlaps* function of the GenomicsAlignment package. Only unique reads
222overlapping the exonic gene regions were counted²⁸. Using a cut-off value of at
223least 1 RPKM average across all samples, raw expression counts of the remaining
22410,938 genes passing this filter were used for differential expression analysis with
225EdgeR²⁹. Within each experimental group (Group 1, 2, 3, 4), the read counts from
226the four biological replicates were combined. For differential expression analysis,
227Groups 1 & 2 (before and after clean air) and Groups 3 & 4 (before and after THS)
228were treated as two separate experimental comparisons. Genes were considered to
229be DEGs if they had a false discovery rate (FDR) < 0.1 by EdgeR. Cluster-Profiler³⁰
230and Reactome PA³¹ (RPA) packages were used to identify over represented GO
231terms and enriched Reactome pathways, respectively, as described in the package
232manual. Additionally, enrichment analyses of pathways were performed using the
233Ingenuity Pathway Analysis (IPA) software (Qiagen, Germantown, MD, USA). Briefly,
234statistically significant transcripts were uploaded to IPA, and human homologs were
235automatically identified using NCBI's HomoloGene.

236*Statistical Analysis:* The EdgeR package was used to obtain log-fold changes, p-
237values, and FDR scores (based on the Benjamini-Hochberg's method). A gene was

238considered significantly differentially expressed if the FDR was less than 0.1.
239ClusterProfiler and RPA packages used a Benjamini-Hochberg adjusted p-value of
240less than 0.05 to identify significantly enriched Gene Ontology terms and Reactome
241Pathways, respectively. IPA used the Fisher's Exact Test with a p-value threshold of
2420.05 to identify statistically significant pathways; the algorithm considered both
243direct and indirect relationships using the Ingenuity Knowledge Base (genes only) as
244the reference set.

245

246

247

248**Results**

249***Exposure to THS Altered Gene Expression in Human Nasal Epithelium***

250 The samples collected with this method were small and sufficient quantities
251of RNA for sequencing analysis could only be extracted from four women. By
252chance, these four participants had all been randomized to receive the clean air
253exposure first and THS exposure second, thus we were unable to determine the
254effect of order on RNA expression. After processing RNA-seq reads, data were
255analyzed to determine if there were differences in gene expression in the groups
256exposed to either clean air (Group 1 vs Group 2) or THS (Group 3 vs Group 4)
257(eFigure 1 in the Supplement). The dataset consisted of approximately 10,000
258genes of which 2 and 389 were significantly differentially affected ($FDR < 0.10$) in
259clean air and THS-exposed subjects, respectively (eTable 1 in the Supplement). The
260data set is downloadable from SRA/GEO under submission number
261PRJNA514351/GSE129959. The two down-regulated genes (hemoglobin, alpha 1 and
262hemoglobin, alpha 2) identified when subjects were exposed to clean air had an
263absolute fold change of 8.2 and 8.7, respectively (eTable 2 in the Supplement). No
264genes were significantly up-regulated in the group exposed to clean air (eFigure 2 in
265the Supplement). Because these results showed that wearing the respirator for 3.5
266hours and inhaling clean air did not significantly impact gene expression, clean air
267was not studied further.

268 Nasal samples collected after THS exposure had a significant number of DEGs
269compared to samples collected before exposure (eTable 1 and eFigure 2 in the
270Supplement). A total of 382 genes were significantly up-regulated ($FDR < 0.1$),
271while seven were down-regulated (eTable 1 in the Supplement). The \log_2 -fold
272changes for up-regulated genes ranged from 2 to 7, while down-regulated genes

273ranged from -2 to -9 (eTable 3 in the Supplement). These data demonstrate that
274inhalation of THS for a relatively short time significantly altered gene expression in
275human nasal epithelium.

276**GO Term Enrichment Analysis**

277 We performed Gene Ontology (GO) enrichment analysis on the up-regulated
278DEGs to identify biological functions affected by THS (Figure 2A and B; eTables 4-6
279in the Supplement). The GO database categorizes genes into different ontologies
280that represent biological knowledge³². Our analysis identified 11 functions enriched
281within the Biological Processes, 13 within Cellular Components, and 1 within
282Molecular Function. All the processes were significantly enriched (q-value of < 0.05)
283(eTables 4-6 in the Supplement). Most of the affected biological processes and
284cellular components in THS-exposed subjects involved mitochondrial function or
285RNA metabolism. The top GO Biological Process terms included Ribonucleoprotein
286Complex Biogenesis (GO:0022613), Cellular Respiration (GO:0045333), Respiration
287Electron Transport Chain (GO:0022904), and Mitochondrial ATP Synthesis Coupled
288Electron Transport (GO:0042775) (Figure 2A). Most of the remaining GO Biological
289Processes included oxidative phosphorylation-related functions (eTable 4 in the
290Supplement). The top enriched GO Cellular Components terms included
291Mitochondria Protein Complex (GO:0098798), Mitochondrial Membrane Part
292(GO:0044455), Ribosomal Subunit (GO:0044391), Inner Mitochondrial Membrane
293Protein Complex (GO:0098800), Respiratory Chain (GO:0070469), Large Ribosomal
294Subunit (GO:0015934) and Respiratory Chain Complex (GO:0098803) (Figure 2B).
295All the remaining GO terms involved mitochondrial functions except for the two that
296were related to Ribosomal Subunit (eTable 5 in the Supplement). No enriched GO
297terms could be identified for the down-regulated genes in the THS experimental

298group, most likely due to the small number of genes in this set.

299**Reactome Enrichment Analysis**

300 The Reactome enrichment analysis was used to further evaluate the up-
301regulated DEGs after THS exposure. This analysis yielded a total of 25 pathways
302that were significantly enriched (eTable 7 in the Supplement). The top six pathways
303(Figure 2C) included the Citric Acid Cycle (TCA) (R-HSA-1428517), Respiratory
304Electron Transport (R-HSA-611105), Translation (R-HSA-72766), Mitochondrial
305Protein Import (R-HSA-1268020), mRNA Splicing-Minor Pathway (R-HSA-72165), and
306Nucleotide Excision Repair (R-HAS-5696398). Figure 2C shows the genes associated
307with each pathway and their overlap, when they belong to multiple pathways. Also
308shown are the approximate fold-change values of each gene.

309**Ingenuity Pathway Analysis**

310 IPA was also performed using upregulated genes in the THS-exposed group.
311The top pathways identified included Sirtuin Signaling Pathways, EIF2 Signaling,
312Mitochondrial Dysfunction, and Oxidative Phosphorylation (Table 1). Some pathways
313identified in IPA overlapped with those identified using Reactome enrichment
314analysis, including Mitochondrial Related Pathways and DNA repair-related
315pathways. The top toxicological pathways identified included mainly processes
316related to mitochondrial activity, such as Mitochondrial Dysfunction, Increases
317Transmembrane Potential of Mitochondria & Mitochondrial Membrane, and
318Decreases Permeability Transition of Mitochondria & Mitochondrial Membrane. In
319addition, genes were linked to Glutathione Depletion Phase II Reactions (Table 1).

IPA identified Diseases and Functions that are associated with the DEGs after THS exposure (Table 2). These data were filtered and only functions with activated z-scores that predict transcriptional activation or inhibition based on literature reports are presented (Table 2). The identified functions included decreased cell death and increased cell viability, homologous recombination, and cell proliferation. eFigure 3 in the Supplement shows up-regulated genes associated with inhibition of cell death. The figure includes gene names and whether their expression could activate (orange lines) or inhibit (blue lines) cell death. For cell death, the majority of the up-regulated genes predict inhibition (blue lines). Based on each gene's biological role, IPA predicted that cell death had an activation z-score of - 3.117 (overall process decreased) (Table 2). Complementary to cell death, cell viability (z-score = 5.026) (eFigure 4 in the Supplement) and homologous recombination (z-score = 2.828) (eFigure 5 in the Supplement) both had increased activation states (Table 2).

Discussion

The adverse health effects of THS have been studied in cultured cells and animal models², but similar investigations have not been previously performed on human subjects. Our study provides the first insight into the transcriptional responses of human respiratory epithelium to acute THS exposure. Remarkably, we found changes in gene expression in healthy nonsmokers following a 3-hour exposure to THS. The absence of an effect following clean air exposure provides evidence that the changes in gene expression following THS exposure are caused by THS *per se* and are not by the respirator worn during exposure. Because gene expression in the nasal epithelium is similar to the bronchial epithelium³³, our data are also relevant to the cells deeper in the respiratory system.

346 Our analyses demonstrate that brief exposure to THS affects mitochondrial
347 activity. We previously reported that cultured mNSC undergo SIMH following
348 exposure to THS extracts¹². This process was originally described during treatment
349 of mouse embryonic fibroblasts with UV light and cell cycle inhibitors, such as
350 actinomycin D¹³. SIMH is characterized by fusion of mitochondria and subsequent
351 increased production of ATP and superoxide¹². We found an enrichment in pathways
352 and biological processes related to increased mitochondrial activity and oxidative
353 stress after THS exposure, such as mitochondrial ATP synthesis coupled electron
354 transport chain (GO:0042773), respiratory electron transport (R-HSA-611105) and
355 oxidative phosphorylation (IPA). Increased expression of these pathways is also
356 consistent with an increase in ATP synthesis, as occurs in SIMH¹². Some genes
357 related to the TCA cycle were also upregulated, which could also increase ATP
358 production. Several studies have shown that cigarette smoking also induces
359 activation of mitochondrial pathways similar to those found in our study^{34,35,36}.

360 While SIMH results in increased ATP production, it also increases ROS^{12,13}.
361 Our IPA analysis showed that Glutathione Depletion Phase II Reactions were
362 upregulated after THS exposure. Specifically, there was an increase in glutathione
363 synthetase (GSS) expression, which was also increased in a male germ cell line
364 exposed to THS¹⁴. This gene is part of the glutathione (GSH) synthetase pathway,
365 which scavenges ROS³⁷, suggesting the increase of the GSS gene is a cellular
366 response to high levels of ROS.

367 In prior studies, increased ROS was associated with oxidative stress and
368 damage of proteins, lipids and DNA³⁸, while THS treatment was correlated with DNA
369 damage *in vitro*^{10,9}. Our IPA-based enriched pathway analysis included up-regulation
370 of the Nucleotide Excision Repair Pathway in THS exposed subjects. Two of the

371genes affected in this pathway included Xeroderma pigmentosum group C (XPC)
372and RNA polymerase II. The former is essential for recognition of DNA damage and
373plays a role in the early steps of the Nucleotide Excision Repair Pathway³⁹. Up-
374regulation of RNA polymerase II has also been associated with a response to
375increased DNA damage⁴⁰. IPA also identified an increased activation of homologous
376recombination. This pathway provides a repair mechanism for double stranded DNA
377breaks⁴¹. Activation of the DNA repair pathways is also a cellular mechanism to
378facilitate survival⁴². In addition, an in vitro study showed that THS induces oxidation
379of mitochondrial proteins¹². The increase in ROS as evidenced by upregulation of
380ROS scavenging genes in our data could also result in oxidation of mitochondrial
381proteins by high local concentrations of superoxide.

382 Our data further demonstrate that there is an overall increase in processes
383related to cell viability, which includes some genes involved in cell proliferation. Our
384results are consistent with previous *in vitro* studies showing increased proliferation
385of cultured mouse neural stem cells and human lung cancer cells exposed to THS
386extract^{12, 43}. Nicotine, a major component of THS⁴ and a chemical in our exposure
387chamber, can activate alpha nicotinic acetylcholine receptors (nAChRs) in normal
388human airway epithelial cells, leading to phosphorylation (activation) of
389serine/threonine kinase Akt, which is involved in many cellular survival pathways⁴⁴.
390Akt can be activated within minutes of exposure to nicotine or NNK⁴⁴, further
391demonstrating that chemicals in THS could produce a rapid response. Nicotine is
392also associated with increased proliferation of human cancer cell lines by activating
393the 7 α nAChR⁴⁵. Considering that nicotine stimulates cell proliferation⁴⁵, it is possible
394that nicotine in THS contributes to the increase in cell viability pathways that we
395observed.

396 Nicotine is also involved in inhibiting apoptosis⁴⁶. In our study, the increased
397 expression of genes involved in inhibiting cell death (IPA) may have been associated
398 with nicotine, which was present in the THS at a concentration of 0.03 mg/m³.
399 Consistent with our study, cells exposed to THS *in vitro* showed decreased
400 expression in pro-apoptotic genes¹². The mechanism by which nicotine inhibits
401 apoptosis has been studied in mouse liver cells⁴⁷. Activation of 7 α nAChRs in the
402 mitochondrial outer membrane by nicotine inhibited hydrogen peroxide induced
403 apoptosis by impairing Ca²⁺ accumulation in mitochondria and cytochrome C
404 release⁴⁷. However, this suppression of cell death may be transitory. Bahl et al.¹²
405 showed that cells exposed to THS for 30 days had a decrease in cell proliferation
406 and lost mitochondrial membrane potential, indicating that cells were entering
407 apoptosis.

408 **Limitations.** This is an initial study based on four participants. Future work should
409 be done to determine if similar data are obtained with a larger number of subjects
410 that includes both genders.

411 In summary, this is the first exposure study to document an association
412 between THS and gene expression in human subjects. Our results show that THS
413 induced cell survival responses, which included up-regulation of genes involved in
414 DNA repair, activation of cell viability, increased mitochondrial activity, and
415 inhibition of cell death (Figure 3). These changes are very similar to those reported
416 previously for *in vitro* cultured cells^{9,11,12}. Importantly, the changes in gene
417 expression in the current study were seen following a relatively short (3 hr)
418 exposure, indicating that humans respond rapidly to THS. Future studies on long-
419 term exposure in conjunction with our study would help complete our understanding
420 of the effects of THS on human health. Our study provides an important foundation

421for physicians treating patients exposed to THS and for future development of
422regulations dealing with remediation of indoor environments contaminated with
423THS.

424References

4251. Matt GE, Quintana PJE, Destailats H, et al. Thirdhand tobacco smoke: Emerging
426evidence and arguments for a multidisciplinary research agenda. *Environmental*
427*Health Perspectives*. 2011;119(9):1218-1226.doi:10.1289/ehp.1103500.
428
4292. Jacob III P, Benowitz NL, Destailats H, et al. Thirdhand smoke: New evidence,
430challenges, and future directions. *Chemical Research in Toxicology*. 2017;30:
431270–294. doi:10.1021/acs.chemrestox.6b00343.
432
4333. Singer BC, Hodgson AT, Nazaroff WW. Gas-phase organics in environmental
434tobacco smoke: 2. Exposure-relevant emission factors and indirect exposures from
435habitual smoking. *Atmospheric Environment*. 2003;37:
4365551–5561.doi:10.1016/j.atmosenv.2003.07.015.
437
4384. Bahl V, Jacob III P, Havel C, et al. Thirdhand cigarette smoke: Factors affection
439exposure and remediation. *PLOS ONE*. 2014;9(10): e108258.
440doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0108258.
441
4425. Sleiman M, Gundel LA, Pankow JF, et al. Formation of carcinogens indoors by
443surface-mediated reactions of nicotine with nitrous acid, leading to potential
444thirdhand smoke hazards. *PNAS*. 2010;107(15):
4456576-6581.doi:10.1073/pnas.0912820107.
446
4476. Schick SF, Farraro KF, Perrino C, et al. Thirdhand cigarette smoke in an
448experimental chamber: evidence of surface deposition of nicotine, nitrosamines and
449polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and de novo formation of NNK. *Tobacco Control*.
4502014;23:152-159.doi: 10.1136/ tobaccocontrol-2012-050915.
451
4527. Hoffmann D, Hecht SS. Nicotine-derived N-Nitrosamines and tobacco-related
453cancer: Current status and future directions. *Cancer Research*. 1985; 45; 935-944.
454
4558. Petrick L, Destailats H, Zouev I, et al. Sorption, desorption, and surface oxidative
456fate of nicotine. *Physical Chemistry Chemical Physics*. 2010;12:10356–
45710364.doi:10.1039/c002643c.
458
4599. Hang B, Sarker AH, Havel C, et al. Thirdhand smoke causes DNA damage in
460human cells. *Mutagenesis*. 2013; 28(4): 381–391. doi:10.1093/mutage/get013.
461
46210. Bahl V, Shim HJ, Jacob III P, et al. Thirdhand smoke: Chemicals dynamics,
463cytotoxicity, and genotoxicity in outdoor and indoor environments. *Toxicology in*
464*Vitro*. 2016; 32: 220-231. doi:10.1016/j.tiv.2015.12.007.
465

46611. Bahl V, Weng NJH, Schick SF, et al. Cytotoxicity of thirdhand smoke and
467identification of acrolein as a volatile thirdhand smoke chemical that inhibits cell
468proliferation. *Toxicological Science*. 2016b;50(1):
469234-246.doi:10.1093/toxsci/kfv327.
470
47112. Bahl V, Johnson K, Phandthong R, et al. Thirdhand cigarette smoke causes
472stress-induced mitochondria hyperfusion and alters the transcriptional profile of
473stem cells. *Toxicological Science*. 2016c;53(1): 55-69. doi:10.1093/toxsci/kfw102.
474
47513. Tondera D, Grandemange S, Jourdain A, et al. SLP-2 required for stress induced
476mitochondrial hyperfusion. *The EMBO Journal*. 2009;28:589-1600.
477doi:10.1038/emboj.2009.89.
478
47914. Xu B, Chen M, Yao M, et al. Metabolomics reveals metabolic changes in male
480reproductive cells exposed to thirdhand smoke. *Scientific Reports*.
4812015;5:15512.doi:10.1038/srep15512.
482
48315. Martins-Green M, Adhami N, Frankos M, et al. Cigarette smoke toxins deposited
484on surfaces: Implications for human health. *PLoS ONE*. 2014;9(1): e86391.
485doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0086391.
486
48716. Adhami, N, Starck, SR, Flores, C, and Martins-Green, M. A health threat to
488bystanders living in the homes of smokers: How some toxins deposited on surfaces
489can cause insulin resistance. *PLoS One*. 2016;11(3): e0149510.
490doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0149510.
491
49217. Adhami N, Chen Y, Martins-Green M. Biomarkers of disease can be detected in
493mice
494as early as 4 weeks after initiation of exposure to third-hand smoke levels
495equivalent to those found in homes of smokers. *Clinical Science*. 2017;131:2409-
4962426. doi:10.1042/CS20171053.
497
49818. Hang B, Snijders, AM, Huang Y, et al. Early exposure to thirdhand cigarette
499smoke effects body mass and the development of immunity in mice. *Scientific*
500*Reports*. 2017; 7: 41915. doi:10.1038/srep41915.
501
50219. Matt GE, Quintana PJE, Zakarina JM, et al. When smokers move out and non-
503smokers move in: residential thirdhand smoke pollution and exposure. *Tobacco*
504*Control*. 2011;20: e1
505doi:10.1136/tc.2010.037382.
506
50720. Matt GE, Quintana PJE, Hovell MF, et al. Residual tobacco smoke pollution in
508used cars for sale: Air, dust, and surfaces. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*.
5092008;10(9):1467-1475. doi: 10.1080/14622200802279898.
510
51121. Beko G, Morrison G, Weschler CJ, Koch HM, et al. Dermal uptake of nicotine from
512air and clothing: Experimental verification. *Indoor Air*. 2018; 28: 247-257.doi:
51310.1111/ina.12437.
514
51522. Matt GE, Quintana PJE, Hovell MF, et al. Households contaminated by

516 environmental tobacco smoke: sources of infant exposures. *Tobacco Control*.
 517 2004;13: 29–37. doi: 10.1136/tc.2003.003889.
 518
 519 23. Schick SF, Farraro KF, Fang J, et al. An apparatus for generating aged cigarette
 520 smoke for controlled human exposure studies. *Aerosol Science and Technology*.
 521 2012;46(11):1246–1255. doi:10.1080/02786826.2012.708947.
 522
 523 24. Backman TWH, Girke T. systemPiperR: NGS workflow and report generation
 524 environment. *BMC Bioinformatics*. *BMC Bioinformatics*.
 525 2016;17:388. doi:10.1186/s12859-016-1241-0.
 526
 527 25. Bolger AM, Lohse M, Usadel B. Trimmomatic: a flexible trimmer for illumine
 528 sequence data. *Genome analysis*. 2014; 30(15): 2114–2120.
 529 doi:10.1093/bioinformatics/btu170.
 530
 531 26. Langmead B, Salzberg S. Fast gapped-read alignment with Bowtie 2. *Nature*
 532 *Methods*. 2013;9(4):357–359. doi:10.1038/nmeth.1923.
 533
 534 27. Kim D, Pertea G, Trapnell C, et al. TopHat2: accurate alignment of
 535 transcriptomes in the presence of insertions, deletions and gene fusions. *Genome*
 536 *Biology*. 2013;14:R36. doi:10.1186/gb-2013-14-4-r36.
 537
 538 28. Lawrence M, Huber W, Pages H, et al. Software for computing and annotating
 539 genomics ranges. *PLoS Computational Biology*. 2013;9(8), e1003118.
 540 doi:10.1371/journal.pcbi.1003118.
 541
 542 29. Robinson MD, McCarthy DJ, Smyth GK. edgeR: a Bioconductor package for
 543 differential expression analysis of digital gene expression data. *Bioinformatics*.
 544 2010;26(1):139–140. doi:10.1093/bioinformatics/btp616.
 545
 546 30. Yu G, Wang LG, Han Y, et al. clusterProfiler: an R Package for comparing
 547 biological themes among gene clusters. *Technical Communication*. 2012;16(5): 284–
 548 287. doi: 10.1089/omi.2011.0118.
 549
 550 31. Yu G, He QY. ReactomePA: an R/Bioconductor package for reactome pathway
 551 analysis and visualization. *Molecular BioSystems* 2016;12: 477–479. doi:
 552 10.1039/c5mb00663e
 553
 554 32. Blake JA, Christie KR, Dolan ME, et al. Gene Ontology Consortium: going forward.
 555 *Nucleic Acids Res*. 2015;43:D1046–56. doi: 10.1093/nar/gku1179.
 556
 557 33. Perez-Rogers JF, Gerrein J, Anderlind C, et al. Share gene expression alterations
 558 in nasal and bronchial epithelium for lung cancer detection. *JNCI Journal of the*
 559 *National Cancer Institute*. 2007;109(7):djw327. doi: 10.1093/jnci/djw327.
 560
 561 34. Suter M, Ma J, Harris AS, et al. Maternal tobacco use modestly alters correlated
 562 epigenome-wide placental DNA methylation and gene expression. *Epigenetics*
 563 2011;6(11):1284–1294. doi:10.4161/epi.6.11.17819.
 564

56535. Wang J, Cui W, Wei J, et al. Genome-wide expression analysis reveals diverse
566effects of acute nicotine exposure on neuronal function-related genes and
567pathways. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*. 2011;2:5. doi: 10.3389/fpsy.2011.00005.
568

56936. Pierrou S, Broberg P, O'Donnell RA, et al. Expression of genes involved in
570oxidative stress responses in airway epithelial cells of smokers with chronic
571obstructive pulmonary disease. *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care
572Medicine*. 2007;175(6): 577-586. doi: 10.1164/rccm.200607-931OC.
573

57437. Patlevic P, Vaskova J, Svorc PJ, et al. Reactive oxygen species and antioxidant
575defense in human gastrointestinal diseases. *Integrative Medicine Research*.
5762016;5:250-258. doi: 10.1016/j.imr.2016.07.004.
577

57838. Schieber M, Chandel NS. ROS function in redox signaling and oxidative stress.
579*Current Biology*. 2014;24(10): R453-R462. doi:10.1016/j.cub.2014.03.034.
580

58139. Sears CR, Zhou H, Justice MJ, et al. Xeroderma pigmentosum group C deficiency
582alters cigarette smoke DNA damage cell fate and accelerates emphysema
583development. *American Journal of Respiratory Cell and Molecular Biology*.
5842018;58(3):402-411. doi: 10.1165/rcmb.2017-0251OC.
585

58640. Chiou YY, Hu J, Sancar A, et al. RNA polymerase II is released from the DNA
587template during transcription-coupled repair in mammalian cells. *J Biol Chem*.
5882018;293(7):2476-2486. doi:10.1074/jbc.RA117.000971.
589

59041. Jasin M, Rothstein R. Repair of strand breaks by homologous recombination.
591*Cold Spring Harbor Perspectives in Biology*. 2013;5: a012740. doi:
59210.1101/cshperspect.a012740
593

59442. Hoeijmakers JHJ. DNA Damage, aging, and cancer. *N Engl J Med*. 2009;
595361:1475-85. doi: 10.1056/NEJMr0804615
596

59743. Hang B, Wang Y, Huang Y, et al. Short-term early exposure to thirdhand
598cigarette smoke increases lung cancer incidence in mice. *Clinical Sciences*. 2018;
599132:475-488. doi.org/10.1042/CS20171521
600

60144. West KA, Brognard J, Clark AS, et al. Rapid Akt activation by nicotine and a
602tobacco carcinogen modulates the phenotype of normal human airway epithelial
603cells. *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. 2003;111: 81-90. doi:10.1172/JCI200316147.
604

60545. Dasgupta P, Rizwani W, Pillai S, et al. Nicotine induces cell proliferation, invasion
606and epithelial-mesenchymal transition in a variety of human cancer cell line.
607*International Journal of Cancer*. 2009;124:36-45. doi:10.1002/ijc.23894.
608

60946. Mai H, May WS, Gao F, Jin Z, Deng X. A functional role for nicotine in Bcl2
610phosphorylation and suppression of apoptosis. *The Journal Biological Chemistry*.
6112003; 278:1886-1891. doi: 10.1074/jbc.M209044200
612

61247. Gergalova G, Lykhmus O, Kalashnyk O, et al. Mitochondria express alpha-7

613nicotinic acetylcholine receptors to regulate Ca^{2+} accumulation and cytochrome c
614release: study of isolated mitochondria. *PLoS ONE*. 2012; 7(2):e31361.
615doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0031361
616

617

618**Acknowledgements:**

619Non-Author Contributions We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Abel Huang,
620BS, Kathryn Jee, BS and Adam Whitlatch, BS, who helped to transfer samples and
621perform clinical research. All were all employed by the Department of Clinical
622Pharmacology and Department of Medicine at the University of California, San
623Francisco.

625**Funding**

626Research carried at UCR was funded by a grant from the Tobacco-Related Disease
627Research Program of California (#24RT-0037) to PT. GP was supported in part by a
628Deans Fellowship from the UCR Graduate Division. The RNA-Seq data analysis
629components were performed using computational resources funded by NIH and NSF
630grants 1S10OD016290-01A1 and ABI-1661152, respectively. The indoor exposure
631experiment at UCSF was supported by grants from the Tobacco Related Disease
632Research Program of California (# 21 ST-011 and 24RT-0039) to SS. The sponsors
633had no role in the design and conduct of the study; collection, management,
634analysis, and interpretation of the data; preparation, review, or approval of the
635manuscript; and decision to submit the manuscript for publication.

636

637**Conflict of Interest**

638

639The authors have no conflicts of interest. Drs. Talbot and Schick have received
640grants from the Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program of California and the
641National Institutes of Health for support of this work.

643**Access to Data and Data Analysis**

PT and GP had full access to all the data in the study and take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis

646

Originality of the Content

All information and materials in the manuscript are original.

649

Data Sharing Statement: The data discussed in this publication have been deposited in NCBI's BioProject database and are available through the SRA accession number PRJNA514351 (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra/PRJNA514351>) and GEO accession GSE129959_

654

Figure Legends

Figure 1. CONSORT Flow Diagram of Parent Study and Subset Sample. Of 26 participants included in the parent study, nasal epithelial samples from four had sufficient RNA to be included in the subset sample.

659

Figure 2. Gene Ontology (GO) and Reactome pathway enrichment analysis of the DEGs in THS exposed human nasal epithelium. Bar charts showing the most highly enriched Biological Process (A) and Cellular Component (B) GO terms. Each bar represents the number of genes identified in our study that are associated with each process or component. All Biological Process and Cellular Components identified had a adjust p-value for multiple testing < 0.05. (C) Network plot showing the top six enriched pathways and the associated genes using Reactome PA. Also shown are the approximate fold change values of each gene (fold-change 2 = yellow; fold-change 3 = green; fold-change 4 = blue; fold-change 5 = purple; fold-

change 6= red). The colored lines show the link between the genes and pathways identified. Abbreviations for bar graph (A): RNP= Ribonucleoprotein; ETC= Electron Transport Chain; ET= electron transport; Mt= Mitochondria. Abbreviations for bar graph (B). IMM= Mitochondrial inner membrane; MM= Mitochondrial membrane; Mt=Mitochondria; RC= Respiratory Chain; LSU= Large Subunit; MRC= Mitochondrial Respiratory Chain; NADH-DN= NADH Dehydrogenase Complex.

Figure 3. Schematic diagram summarizing the responses of human nasal epithelium to THS. THS induced cellular stress leading to activation of cell survival responses including activation of DNA repair pathways, increased cell proliferation, activation of DNA repair pathways, and increased mitochondrial activity in human nasal epithelium. Previous *in vitro* studies have shown similar results where THS causes DNA damage^{9,10}, increase proliferation^{11,43}, increase mitochondria activity¹² and increase ROS¹².

Table 1. IPA Enriched Pathways After THS Exposure

IPA Pathways	p-Value	p-Value > 0.01	p-Value < 0.01	# of Genes
Canonical Pathways				
Sirtuin Signaling Pathway	1.23E-02	X		11
EIF2 Signaling	4.57E-03		X	10
Mitochondrial Dysfunction	2.69E-03		X	9
Oxidative Phosphorylation	5.13E-04		X	8
Hereditary Breast Cancer Signaling	3.89E-02	X		6
Oncostatin M Signaling	2.88E-03		X	4
Nucleotide Excision Repair Pathway	3.24E-03		X	4
Colanic Acid Building Blocks Biosynthesis	1.74E-03		X	3
Methionine Degradation I (to Homocysteine)	5.01E-03		X	3
Cysteine Biosynthesis III (mammalia)	6.61E-03		X	3
Glutathione-mediated Detoxification	8.32E-03		X	3
Superpathway of Methionine Degradation	2.34E-02	X		3
Serine Biosynthesis	3.02E-03		X	2
Superpathway of Serine and Glycine Biosynthesis I	6.17E-03		X	2
γ-glutamyl Cycle	2.45E-02	X		2
UDP-N-acetyl-D-galactosamine Biosynthesis I	1.78E-02	X		1
Spliceosomal Cycle	3.47E-02	X		1
L-DOPA Degradation	3.47E-02	X		1
GDP-L-fucose Biosynthesis I (from GDP-D-mannose)	3.47E-02	X		1
Top Toxicological Pathways				
Mitochondrial Dysfunction	3.03E-03		X	9
Increases Transmembrane Potential of Mitochondria and Mitochondrial Membrane	5.82E-02	X		3
Decreases Permeability Transition of Mitochondria and Mitochondrial Membrane	6.16E-03		X	2
Glutathione Depletion Phase	4.36E-02	X		2

II Reactions				
--------------	--	--	--	--

684

685**Table 2. Disease and Function Annotations from IPA**

Categories	Diseases or Functions Annotation	Predicted Activation State	Activation z-score	# Molecules	p-Value	p-Value > 0.01	p-Value < 0.01
Cell Death and Survival	Cell death	Decreased	-3.117	77	1.97E-03		X
Cell Death and Survival	Apoptosis	Decreased	-3.686	63	1.00E-03		X
Cell Death and Survival	Necrosis	Decreased	-2.641	59	3.59E-02	X	
Cell Death and Survival	Cell death of tumor cell lines	Decreased	-3.029	50	2.80E-02	X	
Cell Death and Survival	Apoptosis of tumor cell lines	Decreased	-2.617	41	2.20E-02	X	
Cell Death and Survival	Cell viability	Increased	5.026	38	1.45E-02	X	
Cell Death and Survival	Cell viability of tumor cell lines	Increased	4.59	32	2.16E-02	X	
Cell Death and Survival	Cell viability of breast cancer cell lines	Increased	3.094	10	1.84E-02	X	
Cell Death and Survival	Cell viability of blood cells	Increased	2.195	6	1.58E-02	X	
Cell Death and Survival	Cell viability of leukocytes	Increased	2.2	5	3.34E-02	X	
Infectious Diseases	Viral Infection	Increased	5.315	54	2.00E-03		X
Infectious Diseases	Infection by RNA virus	Increased	4.494	31	2.56E-02	X	
Infectious Diseases	Infection of cells	Increased	4.594	29	9.26E-03		X
Infectious Diseases	Infection by HIV-1	Increased	4.301	23	2.34E-02	X	
Infectious Diseases	Replication of RNA virus	Increased	3.087	19	4.12E-03		X
Infectious Diseases	Infection of cervical cancer cell lines	Increased	3.772	18	1.03E-02	X	
Infectious Diseases	Replication of Influenza A virus	Increased	2.824	13	5.64E-03		X
Cell Cycle, DNA	Homologous	Increased	2.828	8	1.63E-		X

Replication, Recombination, and Repair	recombination of cells				05		
Cellular Development, Cellular Growth and Proliferation	Cell proliferation of breast cancer cell lines	Increased	2.811	18	3.37E- 02	X	

686
687
688
689